



Boston Catholic Journal



NIHIL NISI IESUM

Dedicated to Mary, Mother of God

Salus Animarum Suprema Lex Esto (Canon Law 175)

The Salvation of Souls is the Supreme Law in the Church

**“I am the LORD, your God, who grasp your right hand;
It is I who say to you, *“Fear not, I will help you.”* (Isaiah 41.13)**

Demons and Dogs at the Door

So Many of us Live under the Pall of Fear!

It is very real to us. It influences many of our decisions, infects our judgments, and motivates a great deal of what we do in our daily lives. It is often a driving force, not necessarily overwhelming, but most often subtle, and for its subtlety more sinister.

It stands, as it were, a demon lurking at the door, and we place our foot against it lest the door open and it spring upon us! We offer it pagan sacrifices to appease it,

placate it, to keep it at bay: we offer our *will* (what we *choose* to do, but much more often what we choose *not* to do), our *happiness*, our *peace of mind*, our *freedom* (from worry, anxiety) — for somehow, we have come to believe that *unless* we offer these sacrifices, the demon — **Fear** — will lunge upon us *just* as it threatens to. In fact, we do worse: we *convince* ourselves that our *having made such pagan offerings to the demon **Fear*** have alone warded off these great evils, averted the impending catastrophes that are held, like vicious hounds from hell by a leash, that at best, is but the merest thread.

How often our offerings have been accepted! The looming catastrophe has been averted! We have made the appropriate sacrifice and we have been given a reprieve — but, we know, only for a time. *Good thing we worried!* Good thing we bit our nails, lost sleep, even a portion of our sanity — imagine what would have happened had we *not* feared? *Good thing we lived in misery — before it had opportunity to crush us!*

We are such fools! We refuse to acknowledge what has **NOT** happened and fail to subsequently realize that our fears, our worries, were groundless, needless. No ... we *still* offer our sacrifices to the dogs at the door, and say to ourselves, “our fears

were real! Such and such *could have* happened!” Even though it did not. Even though it *never* did!

You *could* have died in your sleep last night. The world *could* have ended yesterday. The litany is endless of all that *could* have happened — *and did not*.

Shall we fear all that *could* happen — and *will* not; or would we do better to *hope* for a **great good** that *could* happen, and that it likely will come upon us at any minute! That our *deliverance*, our *blessing* — and not *bondage* — is at hand! That *good* awaits us!

Avoiding Misery by ... Co-opting it?

Why? Not because it is more sane, more rational, more reasonable (given the years you’ve spent in misery — attempting to avoid that very misery ... *that never happened*) — all these things are good and compelling reasons (far better and more compelling than the pretending that there is a demon or a dog at the door). The real reason is given in a reading from Isaiah:

*“I am the LORD, your God, who grasp your right hand;
It is I who say to you, “Fear not, I will help you.”*”

The dog at the door, that lurking demon of fear that would rob you of all happiness and hope, is a fiction. God is not.

What does **He** tell you? *“Fear not! I will help you!”*

God is saying that **to you. God!** He is no liar like that demon at the door (which flees from His Presence!).

He comes with good tidings! *“Fear not!”* He comes with absolute assurance, *“I — I, God — will help you!”*

Instead of putting your hand in front of your face before the menacing phantom and fiction at the door (which never came and never will), do what God tells you: Take *His* Hand!

“I am the LORD, your God, who grasp your right hand”

But you — *you* must first reach out to **take** His Hand!

You were quick enough to take the leash of the dogs that drove you to misery. And they were all of your own making.

Stop pretending to be a creator! All you create are fears and worries and anxieties — each one of them equally useless.

The **real** Creator is reaching out His Hand to you — and given the fact that what He creates is good, your chances of obtaining the good, the desire of your heart,

are far more real, than your chances ever were of having that grand piano drop on your head — you know, the one that you have barely kept suspended over you by your senseless fears for so, so, so, long!

You will one day come to realize that it never would have fallen because it was never there.

But God is.

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